

## **Saginaw Bay Coastal Initiative Saginaw Bay *Phragmites* Control and Restoration Demonstration Project**

In response to the growing need to address the rapid spread of *Phragmites* in Saginaw Bay, and to better communicate effective treatment methods and regulatory requirements to the public, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) in partnership with U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office as well as other agencies and local stakeholders have begun implementing a *Phragmites* control demonstration project along selected reaches of *Phragmites* infested public and private owned shorelines (e.g., Great Lakes coastal wetlands). The MDEQ has received funding from U.S. EPA-Great Lakes National Program Office for this effort. The project will contribute towards restoring the fish and wildlife habitat in the Saginaw River/Bay Area of Concern.

The MDEQ, with the assistance of a stakeholder workgroup, has contracted with Ducks Unlimited (DU) to control *Phragmites* and restore native plant communities along select public and private shoreline sites (e.g., coastal wetlands) on Saginaw Bay. Selected *Phragmites* control sites have been chemically or mechanically treated to demonstrate to landowners the effectiveness of the treatment method and the benefits of managing *Phragmites* on their property. The *Phragmites* stakeholder workgroup has selected sites, developed treatment protocol and begun outreach and project monitoring. Site selection consists of five demonstration plots including: mowing, treating with the herbicide imazapyr, treating with the herbicide glyphosate, treating with an imazapyr/glyphosate mixture, and comparing treatment sites to an untreated control site on public and private shoreline areas in Hampton and Bangor Townships. The project will attempt to eliminate or significantly reduce *Phragmites* in coastal shoreline locations to demonstrate to landowners the effectiveness of the chemical treatment of *Phragmites*, the option of mowing, and the benefits of controlling this plant species to coastal wetlands.

Working with the stakeholder workgroup, the Office of the Great Lakes has published a four-color, information/education brochure for Great Lakes shoreline property owners and other riparians facing *Phragmites* invasion throughout Michigan entitled, [A Landowner's Guide to \*Phragmites\* Control](#). The brochure includes specific information regarding management options for controlling *Phragmites* in shoreline areas of the Great Lakes and Michigan wetlands, associated state permit requirements and the benefits to managing *Phragmites*, including the protection and restoration of fish and wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

Specific project activities include:

- Develop a *Phragmites* stakeholder workgroup,
- Selection of control sites,
- Funding of chemical treatment and oversight,
- Develop informational material for local landowners,
- Host media event,
- Conduct follow up site visits, and
- Evaluate control activities.

Other contributors include DU, Cygnet Enterprises, Consumers Energy, and Hampton Township. DU has been actively working to protect, restore, enhance, and manage wetlands

for waterfowl and other wildlife in the Saginaw Bay watershed since the mid-1980's. In addition, DU has been effective with establishing public and private partnerships and leveraging funding for productive habitat projects on both public and private properties that has resulted in the conservation of more than 20,000 acres in the Saginaw Bay watershed. Cygnet Enterprises has been a partner to other *Phragmites* control projects within the St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area, and Hampton Township, and the SBLC will be providing access to shoreline areas in Saginaw Bay that are infested with *Phragmites*.

**Contact:**

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